

PM: Landscaping should become Malaysian culture

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants effort to beautify the landscape around houses, villages and towns to become a culture to turn Malaysia into a beautiful garden country.

He said Malaysia was bestowed with good weather and fertile soil, which makes it easy to plant plants and flowers, and this advantage should be used in the best possible manner to beautify

the national landscape.

He said town planning must be conducted in an orderly manner by taking into account the layout of the same types of buildings and the selections of trees to beautify landscapes and gardens.

“There is an impact if an area is left open. So we should plant trees and ensure it is not left like that.

“Also focus on the beauty of trees that are planted along roads and build places for res-

idents to rest on weekends,” he said after launching the National Landscape Day at the Botanical Garden here yesterday.

He said trees here grew very fast and reached 1½ft in diameter in less than 20 years.

Dr Mahathir criticised the meaningless graffiti on walls of buildings as it tarnished the view.

“But if you want to paint the wall nicely and beautifully, then it’s nice. You can also paint real

pictures. I am not opposed to the painting of my picture (on a wall) in Alor Star. That is okay, but when they start to smear (me), that is not good.”

Present was Federal Territories Minister Khalid Abdul Samad.

Dr Mahathir also handed out grants to communities, developers and local authorities that successfully planned and implemented comprehensive landscape management.

Kuala Lumpur City Hall received the main award, a RM1 million grant, under the Garden Nation Initiative, while Putrajaya Corporation and Iskandar Puteri City Council received RM500,000 and RM300,000 respectively.

National Landscape Day is marked on March 3 and was initiated in 1998. It aims to instil a love for landscaping, in line with Core 1 of the National Landscape Policy. **Bernama**